



Wycombe Wanderers' second goal scored by Steve Essex at Loakes Park on Saturday. Goalkeeper Tony Mackie in a ball roll over the line. Wanderers recorded a 5-1 second position at the top of the table.

# FIVE COAL WARNING!

Wycombe Wanderers 5, Leytonstone 1. Report by STUART EARP

**ROTHMANS** Isthmian League champions Wycombe Wanderers are not giving up their title without a fight. That's the warning they drummed out to the tune of 5-1 against Leytonstone at Loakes Park on Saturday.

This latest victory — their 18th of the season — took Wycombe's unbeaten league record at home to 44 games and if they can continue the sort of form that took Leytonstone apart, the league looks set for another exciting finish. Last term Wanderers came with a late run to clinch the championship on the final day of the season. They could do it again this year.

The chief obstacles in their way are Enfield and Dagham — or perhaps it should be Dagham and Enfield, for the Essex club look to be the main danger at the present time. Enfield slipped again on Saturday being held to a 0-0 draw at home to Sutton, having dropped two other points in a 1-1 midweek draw with Walthamstow. Dagham with three games in hand over the Blues, are trailing by three points.

At this stage of the season maximum points from matches are essential to maintain pressure on league rivals and the way Wycombe slipped smoothly into top gear against Leytonstone is a highly promising omen. They never looked in the slightest trouble on Saturday and with three goals under their

belts by half time, the £40 'bonus' — their third of the season — was assured.

Leytonstone were made to look a yard slower in every department as Wycombe prised open large gaps in the visitors' defence. Long, accurate passing at speed was the key to their success and it was noticeable that when they kept the ball on the turf, they looked a far superior outfit.

The extent of Wycombe's success this season could rest on the shoulders of the midfield trio. The two other departments seem to be ticking over nicely. The defence is near perfect with two players in tremendous form at the moment — John Maskell and Keith Mead. There can't be many better defenders around.

Upfront, Steve Perrin is just unstoppable. He added another brace of goals to his ever increasing tally and with Tony Horsemann and Keith Searle content largely to lay the chances on for him, the goals are coming regularly.

The midfield players, though, have not found the same consistency as their team-mates. On Saturday, they all performed well especially in the first half. Once they take the initiative, Wanderers are home and dry. But against superior opponents to Leytonstone, they will have to increase their work rate.

Wycombe had it all their own way from the word go on Saturday. Given ample time and space, those two vital commodities, they exploited it to the full in perfect conditions. With the game only 120 seconds old, they were a goal up. Mick

Holfield controlled the ball near the bye-line and crossed into the middle over the head of Searle. Perrin, as always in the right place at the right time, stuck out a leg at the ball and watched it bounce past a defender and beat goalkeeper Tony Mackie.

Dave Alexander, preferred to Terry Reardon on this occasion, showed his recent shooting improvement by testing the 'keeper minutes later and with Holfield and the overlapping Gary Hand forming a dangerous partnership on the left, poor Leytonstone could do nothing but try and withstand the waves of home attacks.

One exception came in the 15th minute when John Brooks shot wide after Rayner's free kick had struck a defender. The 'Stones' paid dearly for that miss five minutes later when Perrin made it 2-0. From Howard Kennedy's corner, Mead got up well to head across the six yard box where Perrin flicked in a header that took a slight deflection before beating Mackie.

Seconds later Mackie had to stretch to his limits to hold Mead's powerful effort and with 25 minutes gone, the Blues had built up a formidable tally of eight corners.

The pressure on Leytonstone was unrelenting. Mackie saved a glorious move which ended with Horsemann shooting first time but there was absolutely nothing he could do about the third goal in the 31st minute.

Howard Kennedy has built up quite a reputation for his powerful shooting since joining at the start of the season. His 25 yard

drive into the top right hand corner of Mackie's net on Saturday was a perfect example of his ability. Searle laid on the chance by playing the ball into Kennedy's path. Howard let fly and saw the ball cannon into the net for one of the best goals of the season — certainly the best shot of the season.

Kennedy's effort left the crowd buzzing for a full five minutes and drove the final nail into Leytonstone's coffin. To their credit, they came back well with a good attack in the final minute of the half but Maskell saved Mal Cherry's volley superbly, parrying the effort and then gathering safely.

Three goals up by half time, everyone expected another massacre in the second period. As is so often the case, Wycombe could not match the display as Leytonstone fought gamely.

Leytonstone, however, were not the team to take advantage of this drop in standard and as Wanderers began to pull their game together again, further goals were inevitable.

The fourth came in the 70th minute. Accurate, first time passing carved out the chance with Alexander setting Perrin away on the flank. Cutting in, Steve drove for goal but was off target and the ball flew across the six yard box to Holfield who made no mistake.

Bob Hames cleared off the line from Horsemann before the Stones pulled a goal back in the 87th minute. John Charles' free kick found the head of his Mick Searle. Perrin drove home the loose ball past a coverlet's Maskell.

As it to emphasise the class between the two clubs, Wanderers answered Leytonstone's effrontery to score with their fifth goal. It was another slick move that caught the visitors flat footed with Perrin flicking the ball on for Horsemann to chase. Although Mackie raced out to try and grab the ball, "Bodger" was too quick for him and poked home a deserved goal to round off a highly impressive team performance.

**WYCOMBE:** J. Maskell, P. Bingley, K. Mead, A. Phillips, G. Hand, D. Alexander, H. Kennedy, M. Holfield, A. Horsemann, K. Searle (sub T. Reardon 82 mins), S. Perrin.

**LEYTONSTONE:** A. Mackie, L. Rayner, J. Charles, M. Smith, R. Harnes, P. Copperthwaite, J. Smith, M. Cherry (sub S. King 45 mins), R. Page, J. Brooks, G. Shumake.

**Referee:** J. Martin (Solihull).  
**Half-time:** 2-0. **Goalscorers:** Wycombe — Perrin 2 (2,20), Searle 1 (70), 13thman (90). Leytonstone — Page (87).  
**Official paying attendance:** 789.  
**Approximate total attendance** 2,000.

ROTHMANS ISTHMIAN LEAGUE									
Division One									Pts
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	CD	
Enfield	27	18	6	3	35	15	66	14	
Wye W	24	18	3	3	31	27	57	30	
Dagham	24	18	3	3	31	27	57	30	
Dulwich	29	17	5	7	20	26	56	40	
Chesh	27	18	5	5	26	30	53	50	
Widow	26	14	5	7	27	34	47	40	
Slough	31	14	4	9	23	46	46	20	
Tooting	25	13	5	7	33	30	46	20	
Slough	28	12	5	11	47	36	41	40	
Oxford	29	12	2	14	39	40	40	40	
London	30	11	5	14	42	53	38	20	
Kingston	31	12	2	17	36	48	38	30	
Weymouth	30	10	7	13	42	49	37	0	
Witcham	26	11	2	16	34	43	35	20	
Woking	28	9	8	19	39	61	33	40	
Slough	26	10	2	13	32	38	33	40	
Slough	28	9	4	19	29	37	32	70	
Slough	31	10	2	19	34	54	32	18	
Slough	30	6	9	15	39	52	27	134	
Slough	29	7	8	16	32	52	27	50	
Slough	28	7	8	17	27	42	21	64	
Slough	29	6	12	19	16	16	64		